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MEDICINE AND SURGERY IN EGYPT.

FROM THE EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE OF THIS JOURNAL.

CONTRARY to my expectation, when the last communication was made from Cairo, I have passed three months in Egypt, which has given me a full and satisfactory opportunity of seeing nearly all its great antiquities. After completing the survey, from the shore of the Mediterranean, to the ancient Syene where stood the tower spoken of by the prophet Ezekiel, stepping into and mounting temples till wearied with the labor, I then twice crossed the Desert of Arabia—having been twenty-one days on the back of a camel. The spare hours have been devoted to collecting such medical and surgical notes of the country as could be relied upon, and this letter embraces some of them.

As before remarked, there are three leading maladies in Egypt, for which physicians exert all their skill, but with only a temporary success. First, the plague—about the origin and treatment of which no two agree, any more than in England or our own country in regard to the origin or treatment of cholera. Second, ophthalmia, which receives a diversity of treatment. Third, cholera, which goes where it listeth, and admits of little palliation by medicine.

As to ophthalmia, which I have seen extensively through the whole Nilotic extent of Egypt, to me there is nothing obscure in its origin there. Filth gives rise to it; it always has and always will do so, till the customs and habits of the Arabs and Jews, the principal sufferers, are radically changed—but this will not probably happen, nor the disease, in all its aggravated and hopeless forms, cease to exist, while water flows from the Mountains of the Moon down the inclined plane of the Nile. Once in a while, the men and women of the country wash their faces; but when they do, they touch almost everywhere but their eyes. They are unostomachable objects at all times, and just as much so after rubbing their faces as before. The margins of the eyelids look red and fretted. in the incipient forms of the disease, which makes them still more cautious about touching them with water. An impression exists that the eyes should not be wet, and thus the angles are always in a bad state, especially in children and infants. Swarms of flies are invariably crowding for a place—and when they fly off, the purulent matter with which their feet are laden is transferred to the eyes of others, and thus, it is

probable, the disease is extensively propagated. The dragoman in the service of myself and travelling associates to the first cataract of the Nile, at one time had fearful indications of an acute attack of ophthalmia, which was an anticipated affliction to us, since our intercourse with the people, and the success of our researches, depended essentially on his tongue and eyes. He was urged to bathe his eyes frequently in cold water, and to sleep with a pledget over them, kept well saturated with it. To this he objected, bringing up the old story that nobody dare apply water under such and such circumstances; but I insisted, and by the second day the aspect was completely changed, and within a week he perfectly recovered. In a second instance, a man, officially connected with a public functionary in Cairo, discovered indications of approaching ophthalmia, and was urged to the same course of treatment. He, too, had his whims and prejudices to contend with, but the uncomfortable thought of becoming blind secured the service of the water, and he speedily recovered. When leeches, the usual preliminary course, are applied, I have observed that no reduction of inflammation follows, although the excessive pain and sense of fulness in the ball, and another disagreeable feeling, that of grains of sand under the lid, may subside. The physicians here deplete, sometimes very much; but the evidence of the bad success of their treatment is found in the multitude of blind men, women and children who overrun the whole valley of Egypt.

In the Desert of Arabia, I made it a matter of special inquiry, whether ophthalmia was there; but it was ascertained that the Bedouin Arabs, those dreaded nomads, whose hand is against everybody and everybody's hand against them, are not only never subject to attacks of this form of disease, but are almost invulnerable to every other form. They are thin, spare, tall, bronze-colored people, with coal-black, restless eyes, full of activity and deviltry. My recollections of them are painfully vivid, from the circumstance that while travelling in company with a large mercantile caravan of sixty camels from Ramlah, bound to Egypt over the haji road, we were greatly alarmed, one night, by the rumored attack of the Bedouins. There were two, at the moment, quartered on the hospitality of the travelling Arabs, who are in more fear of these lawless possessors of the desert, than of the courbash of the Sultan.

With me it is a settled point, that extreme personal filthiness and neglect is the cause of ophthalmia in Egypt. The sparkling particles of sand in the desert, it is believed, produce no bad effects. Yet the Bedouins rarely wash themselves, for it is difficult to procure water enough to meet the demands of thirst. They, however, wipe their eyes and dry-wash their faces. When an Arab child is born, as I was informed by a lady of extensive and thorough knowledge of the habits of the Arabs, as well as the Levantines (that is, those born in the country from European, Syrian, Jewish and other stocks), the infant is not washed till it is a year old! Mothers, as I noticed repeatedly, take no pains to drive the flies away from foraging on their children's eyes. In the bazars, among the Jew brokers, and various other classes, I have often gazed at them with astonishment and pity, on account of the cluster of flies prowling about their sore, ulcerated optics. Cleanliness would un-

questionably prevent the disease ; and a consistent antiphlogistic treatment, seasonably adopted, would effectually cure it, when once developed ; but as neither the one nor the other is pursued, ophthalmia is destined to be perpetuated in Egypt while inhabited by the races that now occupy it.

From Dr. Abbott, of Cairo, of whom mention has previously been made, and Dr. Farquar, of Alexandria, both distinguished English practitioners of medicine and surgery, I have obtained information touching the character of the predominant diseases of Egypt, in addition to that collected by personal observation.

Typhus is an annual visitant, principally in the cities, and sweeps off very many persons. The foreign residents, of which the Italians and English are predominant, are severe sufferers by it. Dr. Farquar informs me that intermittents are extensively prevalent in Lower Egypt, and vast numbers die of it. Medications, thus far, have not been successful. The overflowing of the Nile leaves a vast plateau of country in a muddy state for months, as was noticed in passing over the ground in which the fellahs or farmers are obliged to labor, ankle deep, to cover the seed they may have sown. The evaporation under a burning sun has a peculiar influence on the atmosphere, which deranges the vital machinery of the human system. Pulmonary consumption, one would naturally suppose, from the singular customs of the lower orders of people, would be the all-prevailing and incurable disease. Yet the cases are not numerous ; and what is worthy of special record, comparatively rare in places where it would at first seem to be most prevalent. Mechanics, and laborers of all denominations, sailors, &c., including females, go entirely barefooted during life. They are partly amphibious near the Nile, being always in the water, regardless of cold or crocodiles. They sleep, in the one thin cotton garment worn through the day, out of doors, on the bare earth, or in damp, mud hovels—but they have generally excellent health.

Infantile diseases, which embrace a long catalogue of undefined ails, carry off immense multitudes of children. Smallpox also prevails. Dr. Farquar says that mothers invariably stuff their infants with whatever food they have for themselves. They as frequently force bits of carrot down their untried throats, as something more emollient ; and to that cause he attributes a great amount of infantile mortality. When they lose their children, they console themselves with the hope of having more. It is the never-ceasing ambition of both sexes, in every condition of life, in Egypt, to have a numerous offspring. So strong is this desire, that women, and some of a very tender age, as has previously been mentioned, visit certain touch stones in different parts of the country—generally some ancient portion of a pillar or block with hieroglyphical figures—which have the reputation of making them fertile, by saying certain prayers over them. Dr. Abbott informed me that he one day went into an obscure yard, in which he had stored some mummies, where, to his surprise, he found a large collection of females, who displayed great energy in jumping back and forth over the embalmed carcases. On inquiring what they were doing with his property, they

excused themselves by saying they had heard, that, by stepping twelve times over a mummy, it would make them fruitful! Possibly their faith may have some fecundating influence. I cannot explain the anomaly of this universal desire—for anomaly it is, contrasted with the dread of a numerous offspring in other countries. It has always been so in the Orient from the remotest epoch, and probably will continue a characteristic of the people through all succeeding ages. Fatal childbirth seems hardly known. Physicians are rarely consulted in cases of obstetrics. Syphilis is widely spread, and sometimes formidable in its desolating effects on the tissues. I have noticed many a nose in the streets of Cairo, minus all below the bridge. It is singular that the dancing girls—known from the earliest historical periods as the *almeh*—who are prostitutes by profession, and numerous all over Upper and Lower Egypt, are quite free from it, according to the report of those who should be credited. I have seen very many of these singular females—and the question frequently came up in my mind, who are they? They are not Arabs; nor are they Copts—that is, descendants of the original inhabitants, the pyramid builders. They have the facial contour of the Malays, and they also strongly resemble the gipsies seen ranging over England. No one could answer questions respecting them, beyond saying “they came in the boats.”

The Turks are addicted to that one atrocious vice for which Sodom and Gomorrah were consumed by fire from heaven; it appertains to every great man in Egypt. It is without a parallel in the annals of wickedness; yet it is not recognized as a crime, and if it were, those who are the most infamously guilty are above the reach of the law. I could relate a multitude of facts from the lips of eminent medical gentlemen, illustrative of the weight and depth of this abomination of abominations; but as Herodotus said, in speaking of certain mysteries taught him by the priests when he visited Egypt twenty-three centuries ago, I do not feel at liberty to reveal them. A harem of females is bad enough, but a harem of small boys puts humanity to shame.

There are one or two military hospitals in the country, at the head of which is a foreign physician or surgeon, assisted by the native Arab doctors, who have been trained to the profession at the expense of the Pasha. Dr. Farquar is surgeon of one of these institutions, at Alexandria, at a salary of seventy-five dollars a month. The duties no way interfere with his private practice. But the surgery is small, made up principally of accidents. Tumors are rarely seen; amputations are not frequent, but couching is a common operation. Distorted limbs are hardly ever seen. I only saw two cases of club-foot in Egypt. One was a mendicant in Cairo, who invariably run after me on his hands and knees; and the other a little girl, in the Desert, in a caravan.

Cholera has been a desolating scourge here. Coming down the Nile I saw many of the returning pilgrims from Mecca, who came in at Kan-nah, from the Corsair road, and took boats. They gave a fearful account of its devastations among the congregated thousands at the shrine of the prophet. In crossing the Desert there was one of the haji going to Constantinople, who informed me that 20,000 of the pilgrims had



died within a few weeks before he left. When I first landed at Alexandria, the first day of November, 1850, the cholera was just subsiding. The following statistics of its fatality were procured from Dr. Farquar, being extracted from a table which he is expecting to publish in England, in some of the periodicals. Whole number of deaths at Cairo, from Aug. 1st to Sept. 14th—of cholera, 1951; of other diseases, 2310. Total, 4261. Population assumed to exceed 200,000. Deaths in Alexandria, from Aug. 3d to Nov. 11th, 1850—of cholera, 711; all other diseases, 2320. Total, 3031. This falls far below the popular representations in regard to the fatality of cholera at the time of my arrival. It was the common impression, probably, of the ignorant, that all deaths, at the period of its prevalence, were caused by it. Exaggerated accounts produced an alarm that reached London. While at Naples, Rome, and finally at Malta, very frightful accounts were circulated of the sweeping destruction cholera was making at Alexandria; which has now dwindled down to 711 deaths in a population of over 100,000—so assumed in the absence of any census.

On a former occasion, some general remarks were transmitted in regard to the Egyptian school of medicine, the glory of which was exhibited during the influential days of Clot Bey, the Musselmanized French surgeon, whose name and reputation as an expert operator, and on account of his daring experiments in the plague, are matters of professional history. With the death of his patron, that wise and shamefully slandered old Mahomet Ali, the sun of his greatness immediately set. However, besides a reputation, he got what every adventurer in the service of the Viceroy hopes for, a splendid fortune—and with it made tracks for belle France, where he is resting upon his oars, and quaffing such bottles of champagne as he never drank in the palace of Schonbra, although his master indulged him with the possession of everything else. He is accused now of squandering the Pasha's money, in unnecessarily ordering the fabrication of all sorts of surgical instruments, without reference to cost, and that were of no utility beyond constituting a museum. Say, however, what they may of him—it being fine sport to kick a dead lion—Clot Bey was a great man in his day. He made the medical school at Cairo, and during his administration it had some character. Latterly it has had none. The French influence has died out—the Italian ought to be kicked out. A more beggarly, sycophantic set of unprincipled toadies never existed. At El Arish, the ancient Rhinocolura—where political offenders, after having their noses cut off, were sent for exile—the spot, within the half-mud fortress, still remaining, in which King Baldwin, of Crusade memory, died—the last town of Egypt, on the borders of Palestine—is a quarantine station on the top of a sand swell, which is confided to the charge of one of these cunning renegadoes. He honestly confessed to me that he was not a physician, and, further, that he knew nothing about the practice of medicine. He further said he should like my advice in a difficult case within the tabooed enclosure! He also wished to know whether I had any medicines with me, as he had none. He was health officer, and had the full control of the establishment. Afterwards, a dirty, bare-legged fellow, in the wake

of a caravan in which I was travelling, accidentally finding out that I was a hakeem, asked assistance on account of a bronchial inflammation. He had consulted the grand hakeem at El Arish, who furnished a powder that was to act like magic, but instead of affording relief, augmented the evil about the soft palate. I found it was wood ashes, which he was directed to have blown down the throat, in large pinches, several times a-day, and a lad was actually seen blowing it down with a hollow stick.

At the time of writing, some German medical aspirants are apparently coming into favor, at Cairo, with the Court. They have got possession of the medical school, at all events; and possibly by their gentlemanly address, their show of science, and their apparent sympathy for the poor, may reign in turn. Dr. Greisingen, from Kiel; Dr. Reger, formerly of Tübingen; and Dr. Lantner, of Vienna, I have every reason for believing are truly learned men. These gentlemen lecture on the different branches in French, which is translated, word by word, to the students, in Arabic. These native incipient doctors are gathered together, not of their own accord, probably no one of them ever voluntarily seeking a professional education. The most promising-looking chaps are selected, to be converted into physicians and surgeons—being taken when about 14 years of age, and forthwith put in the way of learning the elements of anatomy and operative surgery, besides being made familiar with other branches of knowledge considered essential to the position they are destined to hold as army and naval medical officers. They are both clothed and fed from the public purse, and some of them, particularly when Mahomet Ali was alive, with whom the institution originated, were sent to Paris, Montpellier, England, &c., to be put in communication with a higher order of minds than were to be found in the medical staff of his school of medicine. In the three different visits I made to Cairo, staying a week on each occasion, the lectures were not going on—consequently I am not personally familiar with the daily routine of instruction. In the course of four or five years, reference unquestionably being had to the age of the pupil—and, it is probable, a due respect being paid also to the public demands for medical servants—they have a certificate of qualification, and leap at once into a commission of army or marine surgeons. These Arab students are invariably thick-skulled fellows, who never make any great progress, and consequently there is no hope of another Albufeda to write upon science or the antiquities of Egypt. A German medical gentleman from Berlin, who is passing the winter at Cairo, on account of impaired health, told me that there were several of the government protégées in Europe now, perfecting themselves for medical practice among their countrymen. Thus far, none of the Arabians have been put in places of high professional responsibility. They are the journeymen, under the guidance of Europeans of more calibre than has yet been exhibited in the ranks of the home-made faculty.

## SKETCHES OF EMINENT LIVING PHYSICIANS.—NO. XX.

[ Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal. ]

REYNELL COATES, M.D., OF PHILADELPHIA.

"Speak, ye, the pure delight, whose favored steps  
The lamp of science through the jealous maze  
Of nature guides, when haply you reveal  
Her secret honors."—*Akenside*.

ALTHOUGH each profession in itself demands a peculiar order of talent and a distinct combination of the mental faculties for the successful performance of its several duties, yet it is well known that the gown, the toga and the medical mantle, each and all cover a great variety of the genus *homo*. Each, however, performs his rôle in the drama of his art or science, and fills some place in the domain of "human action." It is very common for medical teachers and writers to insist on a peculiar order of talent and organization for the medical man. In Cato's estimation, there is scarcely a species or variety of talent which cannot be usefully employed in our great art or science. The simplest of all arts, the art of observing, the child's art of noticing such things as are presented to its senses, is of the first importance to medicine. This art is, however, of no avail unless the reasoning powers are applied to sift the chaff from the wheat, truth from error. All men, indeed, may be divided into two great classes, which will include numerous orders, genera and species, viz., the class of *observers*, whose functions, in Cato's estimation, have been lately entirely overrated—for what are facts without principles? The rough stones of the quarry, without the moulding hand of the statuary or architect! Second, the *reasoners*—or those who seize the thoughts of other men and apply them to their legitimate purposes. The majority of mankind are observers from their childhood up; but nature forms but few true reasoners and logical thinkers. These are the masterpieces of nature; the true prophets, whose deductions are inspirations, whose conclusions are truth—eternal as God. True, an excess of the reflecting faculties will lead to wild and unsubstantial speculations—simply because the premises are either insufficient or unsound; but when properly balanced, we have an Hippocrates, a Galen, a Sydenham or a Rush.

REYNELL COATES, M.D., of Philadelphia, may with great propriety be classed among the thinkers of our profession. His magnificent brow would inform the most careless observer of this fact. He was born in his father's house in our city on the 10th of December, 1802. His father's name was Samuel Coates, and he belonged to the society of Quakers. He was a person of fortune and considerable social influence in his day. The Quaker discipline *not permitting a collegiate education*, Reynell was sent to a well-known academy in Philadelphia, and afterwards to a popular boarding-school at West Town, about thirty miles from Philadelphia, where he completed his classical and other studies. He was noted while there, and has been ever since, for his abilities in the higher mathematics. He commenced the study of medicine at an

early period of his life, and entered the Pennsylvania Hospital as resident student, where he pursued his studies with ardor and enthusiasm. He graduated in the University in 1823; having written his thesis on fractures of the lower extremities. Some of his views were different from those of the professor of surgery, but have since been verified by experience.

Six months after this time, receiving the appointment of surgeon to an East Indiaman, he went to India and the Isle of France. The Burmese war broke out during his five months' stay in Calcutta. He returned in 1824, and commenced the practice of medicine in his native city.

In 1828, he married Margaretta, daughter of William Abbott, by whom he had two children, both of whom died early. He lost his wife in 1835, and his writings since often give evidence of his abiding affection for her.

In 1829 he left the city to accept the station of Professor of Natural Science in Alleghany College, at Meadville. After remaining there one year, he removed to Bristol, in this State, where he practised for two years. He then returned to Philadelphia, and ceased general practice, resorting to his pen as an occupation. Among the first publications with which he was connected, was the "Encyclopædia of Practical Medicine and Surgery," edited by Dr. Hays. Dr. C. contributed the articles on "Adhesion," "Anthrax" and "Ankle," with some others, entire, and that portion of the article "Arm" which refers to the surgical pathology of the region. About this time he became associated with Drs. B. H. Coates (his brother), W. D. Brinklé, H. Bond, F. D. Condie, Franklin Bache and R. M. Huston, in an institution for medical instruction, under the title of the "Philadelphia Medical Academy." The organization continued fifteen months. The two last-named gentlemen are now professors in Jefferson College.

After the death of his wife, Dr. C. took an active part in the South-Sea Expedition, to which he was appointed comparative anatomist. This expedition, it will be remembered, did not sail, and the subject of our sketch had no connection with the one which was afterwards fitted out and sailed. He then delivered some courses (private) of lectures on operative surgery; but being too independent to *seek* patronage from the schools, he found his classes would not warrant his continuing the lectures. Ideas, however, of Dr. C., which were promulgated in these lectures, may be found in the hand-books and other treatises on surgery published since that time. He commenced and successfully carried out several courses of lectures on physiology, human and comparative; which were delivered in several of the principal cities and towns on the Atlantic border, including Boston.

Dr. C. is a member of many learned Societies. He was Vice President of the (now dead) Medical Society of this city; and is a member of the Academy of Natural Sciences, to whose journal he has contributed many valuable papers, principally on the mollusca. Dr. C. contributed largely to the Philadelphia Medical Journal, formerly called Chapman's Journal, and afterwards edited by Dr. J. D. Godman. He

has long been a valuable contributor to several of our medical journals, as well as one in India. His monographs, one of which on Hereditary Hæmorrhage, and his reviews, abound in facts, and are evidently the result of much thought. His mode of reviewing is like that of the later Edinburgh writers in literature; merely using the work reviewed as a text, on which he engrafts his own views and facts.

For several years past his pen has been chiefly occupied in the composition of matters literary, political, &c., for the general public. He is the editor of several annuals, one or two of which he edited exclusively. We may mention the "Leaflets of Memory," as the most popular of these. He wrote a series of capital articles for the "Friend," called "Reminiscences of a Voyage to India." These are interspersed with many valuable observations on natural philosophy and natural history.

His school-book on Human Physiology is, perhaps, the best in our language, and is used very generally, both in our public and private seminaries.

His "Domestic Medicine" is a large volume, whose first chapters are devoted to anatomy and physiology. The whole work is one of great merit, for the facility with which he has adapted the matter to popular apprehension, and the amount of instruction put together.

We cannot well quote either from Dr. C.'s prose or poetic compositions; yet it is well known that he is one of the most vigorous and captivating writers in our country. The general balance of his mind, with strong reasoning powers, gives him great advantages as a medical or polemic writer. His skill in arraying the facts in any doubtful case is very great, and his ingenuity and power in almost any general argument are well understood in our city.

Personally Dr. C. is rather above the middle height—with broad, Herculean shoulders, and limbs to match; "A front like Jove himself;" and formerly "Hyperion curls," but now time has swept these ornaments from his brow. His voice is rather rough, from some slight catarrhal affection. His manner is quiet and contemplative. It is said that—

"Some place their bliss in action, some in ease;  
Those call it pleasure, and contentment these."

Dr. C. is one of the latter, and is perhaps too well charged with the lymphatic temperament to make an active practitioner of medicine. He loves "good living," is a most jovial "good fellow," and can recite poetry from morning till night. We remember well hearing him recite the "Chase," from the "Lady of the Lake," with great beauty and effect.

Long life to him, and a happy immortality in that world about which he knows well how to speculate.

CATO.

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#### MATERNAL INFLUENCE ON THE FŒTUS.

*To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.*

SIR,—The following case occurred recently in my practice, and if you think it worthy of publication you are at liberty to insert it in the Journal.

In the early part of January, 1850, Mrs. M. was delivered of a large, healthy male child, but deformed by a double-cleft hare-lip. The fissures extended through both soft and hard palates. When the child was seven weeks old, it was carried to the Massachusetts General Hospital, where the usual operation was performed on one side, which proved successful. In five or six weeks it was carried again to the Hospital, and the operation performed on the remaining fissure; but owing to the great tension of the parts, it failed to unite, and in two days was torn open so that it hung only by shreds. At this time the family of Mrs. M. removed from their old residence to one immediately adjoining a house occupied by an Irish family. The Irish woman, who was then pregnant, saw the child of Mrs. M. just after its return from the second operation, and expressed a great deal of feeling for its suffering. Some time in the course of the following two months, by request of Mrs. M., I operated on her child at her own house, and during the operation Mrs. M. remained at the house of her Irish neighbor. She of course felt and expressed considerable anxiety for her child, as did also her Irish friend. Mrs. M. was not aware, up to this time, that her neighbor was pregnant.

On the last day of December, 1850, which was just nine months from the time of Mrs. M.'s moving into that neighborhood, the Irish woman was, after a severe instrumental labor, delivered of an unusually large male child, dead; perfect in every respect except the upper lip, which presented the following appearances:—on the side corresponding to the one on which the operation was first performed on the child of Mrs. M., there was a perfect cicatrix, resembling that of the other child after the first operation, except that it was continued up a little higher on the face. On the other side was an ordinary fissure of hare-lip, except the edges of the cleft presented the appearance of having been pared preparatory to the usual operation for that deformity. In a word, the upper lip of the child was almost an exact copy of that of Mrs. M.'s child, when she first moved into the neighborhood of the Irish family.

Till this case came under my observation, I had no faith in the power of the mother to mark her offspring in any manner; but I must confess that, since then, I cannot deny its possibility.

H. A. GERRY.

*Townsend, March 11, 1851.*

#### EXTERNAL APPLICATIONS IN DROPSY.

*To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.*

DEAR SIR,—The article in your Journal of December 25, "On the Treatment of Ascites by Diuretics applied externally," reminds me of a little of my own experience in the use of external remedies in dropsy.

Some six years since, I was called to see a child, 2 years old, with general anasarca and ascites. He had been under treatment some three or four weeks; but was steadily getting worse, and had been left by the attending physician as a hopeless case. His whole body was enormously

distended; his features seeming hardly human. Appetite voracious; constant thirst; bowels very loose; urine scanty; pulse feeble, quick and very frequent; patient restless, and constantly moaning. The usual treatment with diuretics and cathartics, would reduce the distension a little; but what was gained one day would be more than lost the next; for the patient was evidently losing strength, while the disease was steadily gaining ground. As a forlorn hope, I directed the following liniment, to be applied to one half the surface of the body, three times a day. R. Vol. liniment, 2 pts.; tr. cantharides, tr. digitalis, tr. colchicum, tr. iodine, aa 1 pt. The patient was well in a few days, without taking a particle of medicine internally.

Since then, I have used the liniment repeatedly with advantage; several mild cases yielding to this alone, without any other treatment. The liniment is peculiarly adapted to the treatment of dropsy in old persons, children, or delicate females; where the powers of life are feeble, and the stomach and bowels too irritable to bear medicine internally.

Since writing the above, I have treated a case similar to the first one mentioned:—the child having been more or less bloated for several months; legs and body as full “as the skin could hold.” All appearance of disease was removed after a few days’ use of the liniment.

That there is any especial virtue in the particular form or combination of remedies in the liniment, I do not believe; but that external remedies can be used with advantage in most cases of dropsy, I am sure.

*Ausable Forks, N. Y., March, 1851.*

WM. W. FINCH.

#### SENSE AND GENIUS IN THE STUDY OF MEDICINE.

“PRAY, Mr. Opie, may I ask what you mix your colors with?” said a brisk dilettante student to the great painter. “With *brains*, Sir,” was the gruff reply—and the right one. It did not give much of what we call information; it did not expound the principles and rules of the art; but, if the inquirer had the commodity referred to, it would awaken him—it would set him a-going, a-thinking and a-painting to good purpose. If he had not, as was likely enough, the less he had to do with colors and their mixture the better. Many other artists, when asked such a question, would either have set about detailing the mechanical composition of such and such colors, in such and such proportions, rubbed up so and so; or perhaps they would (and so much the better, but not the best) have shown him how they laid them on; but even this would leave him at the critical point. Opie preferred going to the quick and the heart of the matter—“*Brains, Sir.*”

Sir Joshua Reynolds was taken by a friend to see a picture. He was anxious to admire it, and he looked it over with a keen and careful eye. “Capital composition—correct drawing—the color, tone, chiaroscuro excellent; but—but—it wants, hang it, it wants—*that*,” snapping his fingers—and, wanting “*that*,” though it had everything else, it was worth nothing.

Again, Etty was appointed teacher of the students of the Royal

Academy, having been preceded by a clever, talkative, scientific expounder of æsthetics, who delighted to tell the young men *how* everything was done, how to copy this, and how to express that. One came up to the new master, "How should I do this, Sir?" "Suppose you try." Another, "What does this mean, Mr. Etty?" "Suppose you look." "But I have looked." "Suppose you look again." And they did try, and they did look; and they saw and achieved what they never could have done, had the *how* or the *what* (supposing this possible, which is not likely in its full and highest meaning) been told them or done for them; in the one case sight and action were immediate, exact, intense, and secure; in the other, mediate, feeble, and lost as soon as gained. But what are "*brains*"? what did Opie mean? and what is Sir Joshua's "*that*"? What is included in it? and what is the use or the need of trying and trying, of missing often before you hit, when you can be told at once and be done with it; or of looking when you may be shown? Everything in medicine and in painting—practical arts—as means to ends, let their scientific enlargement be ever so rapid and immense, depends upon the right answers to these questions.

First of all, "*brains*," in the painter, are not diligence, knowledge, skill, sensibility, a strong will, or a high aim—he may have all these, and never paint anything so truly good or effective as the rugged wood-cut we must all remember of Apollyon bestriding the whole breadth of the way, and Christian girding at him like a man, in the old sixpenny "*Pilgrim's Progress*"; and a young medical student may have zeal, knowledge, ingenuity, attention, a good eye and a steady hand—he may be an accomplished anatomist, stethoscopist, histologist and analyst; and yet, with all this, and all the lectures, and all the books, and all the sayings, and all the preparations, drawings, tables, and other helps of his teachers, crowded into his memory or his note-books, he may be beaten in treating a whitlow or a colic, by the nurse in the wards where he was clerk, or by the old country doctor who brought him into the world, and who listens with such humble wonder to his young friend's account, on his coming home after each session, of all he had seen and done, and of all the last astonishing discoveries and revolutions of the day. What the painter wants, in addition to, and as the complement of, all the other elements, is *genius and sense*; what the doctor needs to crown, and give worth and safety to his accomplishments, is *sense and genius*: in the first case, more of this, than of that; in the second, more of that, than of this. These are the "*brains*" and the "*that*."—*Edinburgh Monthly Journal of Medical Science*.

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## THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

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BOSTON, MARCH 19, 1851.

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### EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

*On the River Nile, Dec. 16th, 1850.*—At the average rate of 25 miles a day, we are floating down the river towards Cairo. Each day has its



full complement of incidents, and something is constantly learned in the animal, vegetable or mineral kingdoms, which I never should have known without personally traversing this anomalous country. The fields are dressed in green, and the sun shines brilliantly through the day, although the nights are cold whenever the wind rises. It blows now South for some months—consequently, if our speed is at all quickened in returning towards the Mediterranean, it must be accomplished by rowing. In passing by Ekhmim to-day, the site of a once flourishing city of Panopolis, we examined the remains of two temples of renown in the time of Herodotus. All that is left of one of them, bearing a Greek inscription, will soon be forever lost, as the villagers were knocking it to pieces and burning the fragments into lime while we were looking on—the kiln being kept going by burning grass.—Color of the skin is of no consequence in Egypt, as you will not unfrequently see several brothers of different shades, from black to white. A gentleman has coal black Ethiopian, and Circassian wives, at the same time, occupying the same apartments. In the bazars of Ekhmim, very black men were commanding all the attentions of those born of lighter complexions. Some were playing games of chance—even a backgammon board was there. All were smoking, and all were idling away their time. The number of blind persons, those who have lost one eye, together with another class who were suffering from acute inflammation of the organ, very much astonished me, but no one could explain the cause of this amount of local disease. Cataract, it was obvious, produced the cases of total blindness.

*Dec. 19th.*—From day to day the canjai slowly floats towards Cairo. The broken granite columns and crushed arches of a once beautiful city, called Artēnōē, were seen to-day. We hauled up for a stroll over its prostrated monuments. Cellars half filled with broken brick, blocks of hewn stone, with here and there a red granite pillar, buried half way to the top in the plastic filth of more than one thousand years, which each generation of residents had collected on and about the prostrate grandeur of temples, forums, walls, watch towers, and overturned gates, were the melancholy sights on the line of the streets. In a depression, almost a pit, there was the corner of some structure, or the base of a column, if not the pedestal of a statue, with a partially obliterated inscription. A squadron of ragged little girls followed in a cloud of dust, offering antique coins, and begging for backsheish with the same importunity as their seniors.

Soon after completing the survey of Artinōē, the yawl, with four oars, carried us a few miles north, opposite the celebrated grottoes of Beni Hasen. By crossing ploughed fields, around tamarisk bushes, and grass hillocks, we gained the base of the mountain—about midway of which are open doors, facing the west. As we were walking from one to the other, the sun was going down in its glory. Perhaps there may be fifteen of these tombs—totally unlike any others I have visited in the land of *truth and justice*, as it is denominated in the royal cartouches. Each tomb is a square room, excavated into a thick stratum of porous limestone, in which are imbedded sea-shells. In one corner of them, ordinarily, is a square hole, or rather a well, sunk, in one, and doubtless the same in all originally, fifty or sixty feet. They were once filled with mummies, but these were dragged out for fuel, for the linen swathes, and for the hope of treasure, some thousands of years since. Elegant columns within, are prominent objects—and at the doors of some, also. One or two contain a series of historical paintings on the walls, of the utmost importance to chronologists,

as they are the very oldest monuments of the kind in the known world. They were antiquities even before the foundations of Thebes were laid. Copies of them abound in all the late works on ancient Egypt, which precludes the necessity of a description here. I was struck particularly with several long rows of figures representing gymnastic exercises. In all the exhibitions I have witnessed of posture masters—even including the India-Rubber man—none of them ever came up to the contortions of the old Egyptian performers, who probably sat for the limner when these drawings were made. Most of the pictures, however, have been exposed for so many ages to the rude touch of barbarians, those who occupied the tombs for dwellings, and, finally, to the casts taken by Europeans by pressing damp paper over them, that it requires considerable vigor of the imagination to trace out the various employments, in the several departments of domestic economy, they were intended to represent, as practised when the lordly proprietor directed his last resting-place to be thus uniquely ornamented. The Speos Artimedes—by some named the Cave of Diana, the richest of the whole—the ceiling overhead being arched in three divisions, and four tall fluted columns introduced for support, has recently been shamefully mutilated—our dragoman declared, by Dr. Lepsius. About six feet of one of those exceedingly ancient props—going entirely beyond the reach of investigation, according to the opinions of some—was said to be cut out by that learned investigator, and carried off to enrich his majesty's museum in Prussia. Hassan says Dr. Lepsius has *ruined Thebes*—and myself and associates can bear witness to the fact, that wherever we have detected recent injuries, or something has been missing, the guides invariably charged it upon Dr. Lepsius. He probably justifies himself in these spoliation by saying that the things were carried off *to save them*. He saves in a very reprehensible manner for all succeeding travellers. There can be no excuse for him if his expected investigations into the early history of monumental Egypt fall below the anticipations of scholars, archæologists and philosophers. On the opposite side of the river, further south, is the rubbish of a forsaken town, which tradition designates as the residence of the conjurors whom Pharaoh sent for to confront Moses after he had performed those miracles recorded of him, because the hard-hearted monarch would not let the Israelites go.

Having discovered the unfaithfulness of the Reis—our boat-captain—who has over and over again violated the contract, permitting the crew, twelve in all, to do pretty much as they chose, he was threatened with a complaint before a magistrate if there was not an immediate amendment. One of the sailors expressed his contempt for all tribunals. A necessity was pressing, therefore, for determining whether justice could still be found in a place where it was once the boast that the rulers were the servants of the gods of truth and justice. At Minyeh, the residence of a governor of a district or province, we called on His Excellency Mahomed Bey, a corpulent, well-developed, agreeable-looking Turk, who was seated on a rough sort of settee, spread over with a colored sheep-skin with the wool on, under the shade of wide-spreading acacia trees, in front of his office. Various officers were in attendance—some with pistols in their belts, and others with long staves. The offender was sent for—the case stated—and the governor said he should be flogged, if we demanded it. But we prayed that he might be made to promise amendment, and not corporeally punished; which he complied with, of course, and the scoundrel thus saved his bacon. A charge was then entered against Jaffier, the

originator and ring-leader of the increasing spirit of insubordination. Before we were aware of the progress of the trial, he was thrown upon his face into a frame that confined the body, with the feet elevated, and was then slightly bastinadoed—a painful sight to us, but there was no alternative. The law deals in blows altogether, and knows nothing of pecuniary mulcts or tardy police inquiries when a man's life has been in jeopardy. A memorable example of the power and activity of the government, is found in the present utter desolation of two large villages, with empty dwellings that would house several thousand persons, close to the tombs of Beni Hasen. It had become unsafe for travellers to visit those extraordinary artificial openings into the mountains. Word reached the ears of Mahomet Ali, of the outrages committed, which roused the sleeping lion. Every one at all implicated in the alleged thefts and robberies was summarily put to death, and every remaining man, woman and child forcibly driven off the ground. Not a single human being resides there to this day.

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*Arrow Root and its Adulterations.*—In the last number of the Journal, we spoke of a sanitary commission having been appointed in London, for the purpose of making analyses of the various solids and fluids which are consumed by the public. We also stated that we did not know how this commission was appointed, nor the parties that composed it. Since then, the No. of the Lancet, which had been mislaid, containing the first of the series of these examinations, has been examined, and from it we find that the editors of that valuable medical journal are the ones who have undertaken the task. They say, "That the various articles of consumption differ greatly in quality, and are subject to numerous adulterations, must be evident to all, from the slightest consideration and examination of the subject; and if any general proof were required to establish the truth of this position, it would be found in the low and unremunerative price at which very many commodities, to be genuine, are now commonly sold. That, therefore, there is much relating to our food and drink requiring exposure and remedy, cannot be doubted." "The urchin who filches a bun, a penny piece, or the value of one, breaks the law, and is liable to punishment and even imprisonment. Is it to be supposed, therefore, that the cunning and systematic adulterator of our food and drink, who robs us, not only of our money, but sometimes of our health and strength, is less guilty? that he is to be allowed to violate the law with impunity in his daily dealings, and not only to go unpunished, but to carry about with him, as at present he commonly does, in his intercourse with his fellows, the undeserved reputation of an honest man? That the law, while it rigorously punishes the trivial offender, should allow the greater criminal to go at large unscathed, is an insult to common sense."

With regard to arrow root, there are various tubers which yield a fecula, and the starch from them is prepared and sold as the true *maranta arundinacea*. For instance, there is the *tacca*, *curcuma*, potato and arum arrow roots, some of which come from the East Indies, the Society Islands, &c., and are of an inferior quality compared with the Jamaica or Bermuda kinds. Now these are largely mixed with the Bermuda, or are sold alone for it, which the microscope can readily detect. Common starch, and sago meal, are also quite often used for the purposes of adulterating arrow root. Out of fifty samples examined by the commission, 22 were adulter-

ated with the substances before mentioned, some of which contained scarcely a trace of the true maranta arrow root.

The next article examined is COFFEE, which we shall allude to in our next number.

*Ice in Uterine Hæmorrhage.*—It has, until within a few years, been the rule of practice among obstetricians, and of writers upon midwifery generally, to use and recommend the tampon in severe floodings from threatened miscarriages. Experience has shown that its use, in such cases, is a very bad expedient, as the miscarriage which it is our desire to prevent is generally hastened by it. Besides, its uncleanness is an objection to its use, for the secretion of the parts, in ten or twelve hours, impregnates it with a fætor, that, when it is withdrawn, is unhealthy and almost intolerable. Now ice will in most cases arrest the hæmorrhage. If pounded up fine and laid over the uterine region, with large pieces passed into the vagina, there need not, in most cases, be any fear of a great loss of blood. Two cases occurred in our practice the past week, both on the same day, wherein we had an opportunity of testing the hæmostatic powers of this cold remedy, and also the effects of a tampon, in threatened miscarriages. On arriving at the house of our first patient, we found the woman flowing badly. An examination, per vaginam, did not reveal the engagement of a fœtus or placenta in the neck of the uterus. Not being able to obtain any ice conveniently, use was made of a soft sponge as a tampon, and an opiate being given the patient, we left her to repair to the second one. This lady we also found flowing quite freely—and ice being at hand, it was made use of extensively, externally as well as internally. The hæmorrhage soon ceased and the patient has got along comfortably, and up to the present time has had no symptoms that threaten a miscarriage. Such was not the case, however, with the first patient; for at the end of three days she miscarried, in spite of all that could be done to prevent it. It is possible that this result would have followed had ice been used; but from the experience we have had in other cases, we decidedly give our preference to it. Mention is made of these cases, from the fact of their occurring together, and showing the difference of treatment and of results, and not from the novelty of the remedy used in the second case, as we are well aware ice is in general use among our best practitioners. There are *some*, however, who still prefer the tampon, and to such these remarks are particularly addressed.

*Professors Jackson and Bigelow, of Boston.*—Dr. H. J. Bigelow, Professor of Surgery in Harvard University, left Boston in the steamer for Liverpool on Wednesday last. It is his intention to be absent seven or eight months, during which time the principal cities of Europe will be visited by him. The object of his tour is to note every improvement in the line of his profession, and gather such information from the great masters of his art, as may be of value in the department over which he presides. We wish our friend a prosperous and happy voyage, and hope he may return in good health, with such stores of useful information as it is his desire to obtain, and which he so well knows how to use. Our readers may expect occasionally to hear from him, in his absence.

Dr. J. B. S. Jackson leaves Boston, to-day, for Havre, and, as we understand, is to spend the principal part of his time abroad in France. Dr. Jackson is considered one of the best pathological anatomists in this coun-

try. The enthusiasm which he manifests for his favorite science, is rarely equalled, and we have no doubt that he will avail himself, while absent, of the opportunity to investigate many subjects which he could not so well do at home. Our best wishes for his health and prosperity accompany him.

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*History of Medical Education.*—"History of Medical Education and Institutions in the United States, from the first settlement of the British colonies to the year 1850; with a chapter on the present condition and wants of the profession, and the means necessary for supplying those wants, and elevating the character and extending the usefulness of the whole profession. By N. S. Davis, M.D., Professor in Rush Medical College, Chicago, Illinois." Dr. Davis, in this little volume, has given us a history of the rise and progress of medicine, medical institutions, &c., in this country, from the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, in 1620. Such reviews of the past, as Dr. Davis justly remarks, are not only peculiarly appropriate, but in the highest degree profitable to the members of our profession. It is also pleasant to compare the dogmas of the profession in past times, with the present advanced state of medical science. Yet there were many master spirits then in the medical ranks, who labored with a zeal worthy the imitation of their successors. Dr. Davis, in mentioning the wants of the profession of the present day, assumes the proper position; and if his suggestions should be adopted, the greatest practical good would follow, both as regards the interests of the profession and the welfare of individuals generally.

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*Western Reserve College.*—From the catalogue of this institution, which has been received, it appears that there were 202 students attending the medical lectures the past session. This College is located in the city of Cleveland, Ohio; the faculty of which is composed of gentlemen of wide reputation, and it is highly gratifying to know that their school is in so flourishing a condition.

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*Starling Medical College.*—The annual catalogue of the officers and students of Starling Medical College, in Columbus, Ohio, for the session of 1850-51, has been received. Quite a large class, numbering 125, were in attendance. The degree of doctor of medicine was conferred on 59 graduates. The new college building has been completed; and from the drawing of it, on the cover of the catalogue, we should think it quite classic and imposing, proving an ornament to the city in which it is located.

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*Palmer's Artificial Legs.*—Many contrivances have been invented to supply the loss occasioned by the amputation of a leg. Until recently the apparatus made for such purposes, was rude enough consisting of a round billet of wood, having on one end a conical-shaped cup to receive the stump; and being confined by straps above, constituted the new limb. For all practical purposes, this answered tolerably well, provided amputation had occurred below the knee-joint; but when it had taken place above, it was not only inconvenient to use such a leg, but it presented, also, a very awkward appearance when in use. To remedy these evils, has taxed the ingenuity of many an artisan. Artificial limbs have been made with articulations; having cords to act on the various parts, so that their move-

ments would imitate the natural leg. In some instances they have answered the purposes intended, but, as a general thing, from their complicated structure, some parts of the delicate machinery would give way, making it not only a source of great annoyance, but a matter of considerable expense to the wearer. Another objection might be raised against many of these artificial limbs, particularly when they are covered with leather or any other porous substance, on account of the perspiration of the body, or moisture from any other source, being retained, and giving out an unpleasant odor. Within the past week we have had an opportunity of examining a leg made by Mr. B. F. Palmer, of Springfield, in this State, which seems to us to be the *ne plus ultra* of mechanism in this line. It is made of a light wood, covered with an enamel that is impervious to liquids, has flexible joints, and is as complete a substitute for the natural limb as we can conceive of. The leg that we saw was worn by Mr. Charles West, of this city, and so well did it correspond in movements with the natural one, that it was difficult to say which was the artificial leg. We take much pleasure in calling the attention of our readers to Mr. Palmer's improvement in the manufacture of these artificial limbs.

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*Dentifrice and Wash for the Teeth and Gums.*—It is often the case, that individuals engaged in the manufacture of dentifrices and tooth washes, are destitute of any pathological knowledge concerning the teeth and gums. We have known substances used for these organs which are decidedly injurious to them; such, for instance, as powdered pumice stone, peroxide of iron, &c.; yet they have had an extensive sale. It is true, such articles will whiten and make the teeth look beautiful for a while, but, it must be apparent to any one, they will prove injurious to them. Dr. J. A. Cummings, practical dentist, of this city, has laid before us the formula by which he prepares a very nice wash and dentifrice. We cannot see anything that is objectionable in the articles used in his preparation, but, on the contrary, know that they have always been considered of the greatest benefit for spongy gums and corroded teeth. Dr. Cummings has, for the convenience of his patients and others, put up these preparations, with a brush, &c., in a neat case, so as to constitute a complete set of dental toilet articles, which we take pleasure in recommending to general notice.

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*Mortality of Boston in 1850.*—The following extract from the City Registrar's Report, in addition to the quotations from the same last week, gives important information respecting the vital statistics of Boston:—

"By an analysis of the ages of more than 2000 who died in 1850, taken from all the seasons of the year, it is found that the average period of human life in Boston, is less than 21 years; that those of American origin, average over 25 years, while those of foreign origin average scarcely 17 years. The great proportion of infants of foreign parentage, that live only a few days or weeks, is the principal explanation of the difference.

"In relation to the greater mortality, and the shortness of life in this city, as compared with the country, there are several important circumstances that should be borne in mind. Most of the business of the city, commercial and industrial, is performed by men in the prime of life, very many of whom in middle or advanced age retire to the suburban cities and villages, and more remote rural retreats, giving place to younger recruits from abroad.

The fame of Boston, for its hospitals, its curative means and its philanthropy, attracts numbers affected by chronic and incurable maladies to our city, and their names soon find a place in our mortality list, instead of being registered at their proper homes. Of the 525 that died last year in the city institutions, and the Massachusetts General Hospital, by far the greater part belonged abroad, or had resided here only a short time. And as before remarked, it is by including in our tables the foreign population, that an unfavorable aspect is given to the vital statistics of Boston."

*Assistant Surgeons United States Navy.*—Of the candidates lately examined for admission into the service as Assistant Surgeons, the following have been found qualified, viz. :—Samuel F. Coues, Portsmouth N. H.; Jacob S. Dungan, Philadelphia; George Peck, N. Y.; Charles F. Fahs, York, Penn.; Jenks H. Otis, Boston; Frederick Horner, Jr., Warrenton, Va.; James B. Whiting, Norfolk, Va.; Randolph Harrison, Cartersville, Va.; W. E. Wysham, Baltimore, Md.; Albert Schriver, Philadelphia, Pa.; Thomas Le Page Cronmiller, Savage Factory, Md.; E. Drayton, Philadelphia, Pa.; Wm. L. Nichol, Nashville, Tenn.; John C. Coleman, Halifax Courthouse, Va.; J. Page Hopkins, Winchester, Va.; Richard H. Cowman, Annapolis, Md.

Robert T. Macoun, Passed Assistant Surgeon, to rank next after Passed Assistant Surgeon Richard McSherry. William A. Harris, Passed Assistant Surgeon, to rank next after Passed Assistant Surgeon Robert E. Wall. Passed Assistant Surgeon Henry O. Mayo, to rank next after Passed Assistant Surgeon Wm. A. Harris.—*Philad. Medical Examiner.*

*Insanity caused by Tape-worm, and cured by Koussou.*—Dr. Wm. Wood gives an interesting case, in the London Lancet, of a man, confined in the Bethlem Hospital on account of insanity, who became completely restored to his health and reason, after a tape-worm had been discharged by the administration of that celebrated anthelmintic koussou.

*Medical Miscellany.*—There are fifteen physicians among the members of the Legislature of this State.—Dr. Hare lately exhibited before the Pathological Society of London a *human kidney weighing sixteen pounds*. It consisted of a congeries of cysts, and was taken from a man aged 46 years. We believe this is the largest kidney that has ever been recorded.—By an abstract return to the Secretary of this Commonwealth, for the year 1850, we learn that there are 25,981 paupers in the State.—Dr. R. L. Howard, editor of the Ohio Medical and Surgical Journal, has just sailed for Europe.

*DIED.*—In Worcester, Dr. Henry Edes, aged 72 years, a graduate of Harvard University, in the class of 1799.—In Billerica, of disease of the heart, Zadoc Howe, M.D., one of the past presidents of the Massachusetts Medical Society.—At Oxford, Conn., Dr. Noah Stone, aged 68 years

*Deaths in Boston*—for the week ending Saturday noon, March 15, 70.—Males, 34—females, 36  
Accidental, 2—asthma, 1—inflammation of the bowels, 2—disease of the brain, 3—consumption, 7—convulsions, 3—croup, 3—dysentery, 3—dropsy, 2—dropsy of the brain, 4—erysipelas, 1—exhaustion, 1—scarlet fever, 3—lung fever, 3—hooping cough, 2—disease of the heart, 4—infantile, 3—inflammation of the lungs, 4—congestion of the lungs, 3—marasmus, 3—meneses, 5—old age, 2—puerperal, 1—smallpox, 2—teething, 3.  
Under 5 years, 35—between 5 and 20 years, 11—between 20 and 40 years, 15—between 40 and 60 years, 6—over 60 years, 3. Americans, 31; foreigners and children of foreigners, 39.



*Maternal Impressions and the Fœtus.*—Many cases of an unhappy influence exerted through the imagination of the mother upon the fœtus in utero having been lately published—one of which may be found in another part of to-day's Journal—the following, by a correspondent of the London Lancet, is important, as showing that the imagination, though active, and fixed morbidly upon one definite object, is not always capable of producing the effect in question:—

"About two years ago I attended a patient in labor with her first child. She is a very nervous, hysterical woman, and easily alarmed, consequently precisely the subject for extraordinary influence and impressions. During her pregnancy, as far as I could learn, her health was good; at least so far so, that I was not once called upon for professional assistance. Her labor was tolerably speedy, and the presentation natural. On the birth of the child taking place, she anxiously inquired of me if there was any mark of deformity. A careful examination enabled me to assure her that nothing of the kind existed, at which she expressed herself as greatly relieved and highly gratified. With considerable difficulty I managed to get from her, that she had been much alarmed one day when she went to the water-closet by finding a large rat in the basin; she had ever since brooded over this, and her mind was constantly occupied with the dread that her child would be deformed in consequence. The special malformation she anticipated was, that it would have a *rat's head*. I remonstrated with her for having concealed her fear from me, as I should have endeavored to calm her mind by assurances and reasonings to the contrary; but her husband said that he was convinced that nothing but the birth of a well-formed, normally-made child, would have any influence in changing her opinion.

"So far, then, as one case may be taken as an example for a rule, we have here a nervous, hysterical female, with a very impressible mind, fully under the influence of alarming causes at all times, dwelling for months on a cause of dread and disgust—one at all times most likely to alarm a timid woman—her thoughts constantly occupied by one besetting idea, that her child would and must have a peculiar deformity, connected with the cause of the fright she had sustained, and yet not the slightest mark or abnormality existed when the child was born. I may add that the mother was threatened with puerperal mania soon after her confinement."

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*Pension to the Widow of the late Mr. Liston.*—The Government, as no doubt most of our readers have observed, has granted to the widow of the late Robert Liston a pension of £100 per annum. While it is a subject of regret that Mrs. Liston should require such an addition to her income, it is gratifying to know that the just claims to such aid by the widow of one of the greatest of modern surgeons have been thus acknowledged by the Government.

Though almost a solitary instance of the kind, it must be satisfactory to the great body of the surgeons of this kingdom to find, even in a single instance, that the labors of one of their brethren have been, even to the extent mentioned, recognized as a national benefit.—*London Lancet.*

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*Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia.*—At the late commencement of this institution, the degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred on 227 graduates. An address to them was delivered by Prof. Mutter.